The Library/Information School in Context: The Place of Library/Information Science Education Within Higher Education

EVELYN H. DANIEL

Introduction

THE "PLACE IN SPACE" of any organizational unit is dynamic and changes over time. Not only is the unit's position fluid vis-à-vis its institutional parent, but the organizational structure of both unit and parent is also dynamic. Because of the dynamism, it would seem important that each library/information school continually monitor its standing within its own institution and in comparison to other library/information schools.

The task of this paper is to assess the extent to which library/information schools as a group have carved out an organizational niche. To accomplish this a framework for analyzing the institutional setting needs to be established. This constitutes the first section of the paper. The second part describes the current status and some of the organizational transformations that have occurred within the units that hold the responsibility for the education of librarians and other information specialists. The third section of this paper identifies some of the ways an individual unit can measure its status. The final section discusses changes—real and potential—in the shape and direction of the library/information field and raises three questions on institutional perceptions of what library/information schools are becoming.

Evelyn H. Daniel is Dean, School of Library Science, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The University in its Environment

> Organizationally the university is, in fact, one of the most complex structures in modern society; it is also increasingly archaic—*J.A. Perkins.*[1]

Perkins underlines the dilemma of organization theorists trying to understand the university as an organization. One reaches for the blind men and the elephant cliché as a way to begin, in part because it vividly captures the "eye of the beholder" perceptions in accounting for diverse descriptions of phenomena. Organizational research takes place within a number of different disciplines, and theorists' descriptions of organizations differ depending upon whether they touch upon authority, structure, and rationality; or on politics, communication, and human nature; or on the environment, the task group, and design elements; or on some other combination. As the task of this paper is to discuss the place of library/information education within higher education institutions—while not discounting the importance of other conceptualizations—writings that stress the importance of the environment in understanding the university as an organization are selected as most helpful for an analytic framework.

The environment is "the total of circumstances surrounding an organism or groups of organisms."[2] When applied to organizations this concept is elusive. Pfeiffer and other researchers assert that organizational environments are created through a process of attention and interpretation, thus, it is the *perception* of the environment that is important. Pfeiffer terms this the *enacted environment.*[3] This approach singles out formal and informal information systems as filters for perception. However, perceptions are slippery and this paper will eschew the perceived and approach the topic more directly.

Four dimensions of the environment are singled out for research and comment with each being treated as a continuum. The first is the stable-to-dynamic dimension. The more unpredictably changeable the environment is, the more uncertainty is introduced into the organization. Library schools were established, grew, and flourished in a period of growth in the educational level of the general population and a concomitant growth in the use of books and other library resources. New forms of information packaging, information use, and methods of disseminating have shifted the environment of the schools to a more dynamic one. The shift is also manifest in the higher education environments that surround the school making this aspect doubly dynamic.

The second dimension is that of simple-to-complex. An organization is complex to the extent that much sophisticated knowledge is

required. It becomes simple when the knowledge can be broken into easily comprehended components. In general the structure of the small autonomous library/information school is relatively simple to understand. As some schools begin to develop new degree programs (especially at the undergraduate level) and to extend their conceptual domain, there is some movement toward a greater level of complexity but, in comparison to other larger professional schools, the library/information school's structure is still relatively simple. Universities, however, are becoming increasingly complex. In part this is a function of growth, but it also is a function of the differing growth rates of disciplines, the emergence of new fields, interdisciplinary study, innovative institutes, and other devices established as creative funding exercises and/or as ways for diverse groups to mingle productively. New techniques for corporation and university collaboration and new arrangements for interinstitutional networking constitute other organizational complexities.

Market diversity is a third dimension. It concerns the relative integration or diversity of the market for an organization's products or services. If all the graduates of one school accept positions in libraries and all those of another enter the work world as database administrators, systems analysts, information brokers, administrative assistants, consultants, or information resource managers, the market diversity of that school will be much greater and will have an effect on the diversity of courses offered, the background of professors hired, and the organizational structure of the school. In addition to placement, market diversity results from geographic differences (national *v.* regional *v.* international student body and faculty), level of education offered (undergraduate, master's, doctoral, continuing education for professionals), and perhaps the size of the student body. Market diversity is increasing for the library/information schools, probably at a much greater rate than that of their parent organizations.

The last dimension relates to wealth *v.* competitiveness, sometimes characterized as munificent *v.* hostile environment. When the parent institution is satisfied with the flow of resources, performance pressures are few and the constituent units can take a passive stance vis-à-vis recruitment, enrollment, and the initiation of proposals for sponsored research. When resources are perceived to be scarce and are garnered competitively in a hostile arena the units must become more proactive and responsive. Some of the library schools that have closed have been trapped by a sudden downward shift in the parent organization's receipt of resources, sometimes real and sometimes perceived. Tight resources

and a competitive climate—while often co-occurring—are not necessarily correlated. An entrepreneurial spirit can sweep an organization and create a highly competitive climate while the organization enjoys an ample flow of resources. A business-emulating shift in the educational philosophy of leaders of higher education appears to be taking place and has resulted in the recent wave of alliances between universities and the corporate community. This phenomenon has implications for professional schools within universities. Some strategies previously viewed as incompatible with library/information school traditions may need to be reexamined to ensure survival in a new environment.

Market diversity leads to reorganizing the larger unit into divisions. As Thompson notes: "Organizations facing heterogeneous task environments seek to identify homogeneous segments and establish structured units to deal with each."[4] Within universities the rise in importance of the professional schools may be a response to market diversity.

The degree of hostility appears to cause or at least co-occur with a tendency toward greater centralization. An external threat is often the impetus for unifying a country, an organization, or a group of any kind. Complex organizations, like universities, function best in a decentralized mode. When driven to centralize because of threats from the environment, decisions may be less than optimal. Hostile environments also force short-term decision-making that may be out of sync with the manifestations of a long-term cyclic trend.

Other forces within the university push for centralization. Some are technological. The magnitude and indivisibility of the "wired campus" decision, the apparent importance of the charismatic leader in the decision to become a computer-intensive campus, decisions to invest in high technology research that requires elaborate and expensive laboratory setups, all may call for more centralized decision-making. The technology itself, however, may assist in moves toward distributed decision-making that is closely coordinated but neither centralized nor decentralized. If distributed decision-making can be developed and accepted, present descriptions of the university as "loosely coupled"[5] may no longer pertain. Nor may universities continue to be characterized as "organized anarchies" where decisions, energy, and solutions seeking problems are all tossed randomly into a "garbage can" for accidental action.[6]

Mintzberg classes the university as a professional bureaucracy (along with hospitals, schools, social work agencies, and craft production firms),[7] as opposed to a machine bureaucracy or adhocracy (for the organic organization). He notes that the university's work is "highly

specialized in the horizontal dimension, but enlarged in the vertical one."[8] Within any particular discipline or profession, the practitioners' expertise is judged by the special community that exists independently of the organization within which the practitioner works. Within a professional bureaucracy, knowledge and skill are standardized to a high degree, but their complexity requires discretion in application. Simon says the professional handles problems that are "comprehensible in their deep structure, but unfamiliar in their detail."[9]

The university-as-professional-bureaucracy can uncouple its main operating tasks and assign them to groups of individuals who act as relatively autonomous professionals. This allows the structure to be functionally based and market based at the same time. Students in the graduate and professional schools can categorize themselves in terms of the functional knowledge desired or the occupational world to which they aspire. The library/information school is functional because its faculty are grouped according to their special knowledge and skills. It is market based because it deals with its own unique group of students—those seeking to become librarians or information specialists. Lowering the specialization barriers among schools and departments on campus to allow interdisciplinary work is a move away from market-based differentiation. Conversely, hiring faculty from diverse disciplines to enlarge and redefine the knowledge base of a school shifts away from function-based differentiation. Were all units on the campus to foster interdisciplinary studies, the nature of the university might become more organic and adhocrative. It is also possible that schools and departments might lose the uniqueness of their specialized knowledge, and the university might shift to a machine bureaucracy. In any event, the library/information school entertains risk in changing its mission and its knowledge base. Given the turbulent external environment and the more competitive milieu within the university, there may be equal risk to the library/information school in not changing.

A life-cycle theory of organizations that uses biological metaphors of birth, growth, and death is gaining popularity. Aldrich uses a population ecology approach to explain organizational changes.[10] Kimberly, et al. use the title *The Organizational Life Cycle* to group writings on the creation, transformation, and decline of organizations.[11] Organizations grow and as a result they undergo predictable structural transitions. Mintzberg, synthesizing others' work, described a five-stage development sequence: (1) craft, (2) entrepreneurial, (3) bureaucratic, (4) divisionalized, and (5) matrix.[12] The matrix structure is one where managers operate within dual- or multiple-reporting relationships. The grid structure that develops permits more open communication.

Some suggest that the matrix structure may be a move to an organic organization, albeit by a more sophisticated process. Matrix structure may be a means to solve the problem of competing bases for grouping units—geographic, product, functional, market.

Alpert poses a matrix model designed "to portray the organizational structure and practices of the university and to locate organizational problems in a problem solving space."[13] It begins with a set of autonomous academic departments and professional schools. Next is added the connections relating the schools and departments to external stakeholders and parallel schools and departments in other universities.

To work out Alpert's matrix model with the library/information professional school as the center, we note that each school has special relationships with other departments and schools on its campus. In this horizontal dimension it shares the same institutional name, geographic location, board of trustees, and overall organizational identity. Each school also relates to all the other library/information schools on a vertical dimension in a professional/disciplinary community. Alpert notes that the horizontal campus community typically addresses itself primarily to the undergraduate community and the teaching function of the university while the vertical disciplinary community addresses itself primarily to graduate or professional education and research.

The number of departments among research universities varies from about fifty to more than a hundred. The greatest variation among institutions is in the number and identity of the professional schools.[14] More and more the disciplinary and professional communities have assumed responsibility for setting goals, generating research agenda and marketing them to federal sponsors, establishing standards for faculty performance, and for managing societies and refereed journals. The national community may be more meaningful to individual faculty members in terms of culture and even day-to-day contact than are faculty members in other departments on the same campus.

Alpert extends the vertical dimension of professional disciplinary communities as he adds federal agencies and private research foundations, accrediting committees, national professional societies, associations for practicing professionals, and the like. The horizontal campus community is also extended beyond the universities' boundaries through state government support, student tuition, private donors, the alumni association, university foundations, and other educational councils. Many of the latter, however, are strongly linked to the undergraduate educational mission.

The consequence of the matrix structure is that the quality rating of the department or school often depends on externals such as peer

rankings and research support. External ranking has a powerful effect on the internal allocation of resources. The various departmental/professional school ratings taken together comprise an informal institutional rating that represents the university's comparative standing among its peers. Clearly some disciplines are more prestigious than others and their overall ranking is to be weighted accordingly. Alpert notes a strong similarity between the status accorded the discipline on the "macro" level and its departmental status on campus.

Some of the consequences of the enormous and increasing importance attached to external arbiters of quality within the university are (1) an unwillingness of the intellectual leaders on campus to take on the administrative chores of committee work and day-to-day participation in the campus governance process, and (2) the pressure for conformity to disciplinary conventions and fashions particularly at the less distinguished universities. The pressure extends to the individual faculty member who must follow the rules for research productivity in the field or lose out in tenure and promotion.

The integration of the research, education, and public services mission of the university takes place at the level of the individual department or professional school and often at the level of the individual professor. As Bass points out:[15]

> There are many who argue that the integrity of the university is preserved by the interplay among the [research, education and public service] missions. What in fact takes place, however, is that instead of integration of the mission through organizational structure, the "multiple-function" professional faculty member is expected personally to make the necessary connections.

Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary programs like women's studies, gerontology, and similar mission-based areas often are in a double bind. In order to survive, departmental status may be essential, but becoming another junior department competing for resources can be a barrier to collaboration across disciplines. That collaboration and collegiality may have negative consequences is a point made by Weick:[16]

> The basic organizational structure of the university which is characterized as high differentiation and low integration can be understood as a structure that incorporates ambiguity towards cohesion and accuracy. A preference for cohesion is reflected in the mythology of a collegial community; a preference for accuracy is reflected in the mythology of the independent scholar. To be a community is, simultaneously, a good thing and a bad thing.

Alpert asserts that the matrix model reveals the basic dilemma of university presidents. "They are expected to carry the burden of leader-

ship for institutions that are separately accountable to individual legislatures and boards of trustees but governed as part of an inseparable and interdependent nationwide system of institutions."[17] Bass also stresses the prominence of the department as the dominant unit on campus with research the dominant activity within the department that shapes its structure. "The technology of research, consisting mostly of individualized isolated work, tends to dominate the departmental form directly and the university form indirectly."[18]

Two major problems are exacerbated by the matrix model. First, there is a growing public awareness of the need for an interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and interdepartmental education for literate and aware citizens. Boyer and Hechinger advocate that universities and colleges perform an *integrative* function for society.[19] Harlan Cleveland argues for students "who can relate 'hard' technologies to other soft impacts and their implications."[20] This concern is perhaps most strongly aimed at undergraduate education and the teaching function. The current structure militates against the goal of truly integrated learning and conflicts with the goal of advancement of knowledge through research.

A second problem is that decisions on the quality and importance of a particular academic unit are made by a national system of priorities and peer assessment based on research achievement. External review causes departments and schools in the universities of the second tier (and below) to become more alike. The rush to conformity under retrenchment means a sameness in priorities and in the array of high-status disciplines and results in less innovation from one university to the other. In the library/information field the closing of one school precipitated a domino effect—i.e., a rash of closings around the country. In the national system of priorities, library/information schools were perceived to be weak and less able to defend themselves than other more prestigious disciplines and professions.

Within the current system, so aptly described by Alpert, the schools of library/information continue to be threatened. When enrollment within the university overall is up and resources flow, there is little problem. When hard times hit the universities—either collectively or individually—the library/information schools may face closings unless the prestige of the profession climbs vis-à-vis other professions.
Increased status can happen in a number of different ways. For one, the disciplinary base in information science may be strengthened, so that the level of research in the field advances with greater recognition attached to its importance. Or, libraries as institutions may encompass a larger information resources management mission and so return to the

central position on campus that they once enjoyed. As the prestige of the university library waxes and wanes, so too does that of the professional library/information school which is bonded to the library in the perception of the university community.

It is difficult but not impossible for an individual school to buck the negative trends we now seek. It may succeed, however, given strong leadership, a determined faculty, and innovative programming. We see evidence of this taking place in several of our leader schools. The individual strength and higher status of one strong school can have a positive influence on all the other library/information schools despite the impact of powerful external and uncontrollable forces.

The Organizational Status of Library/Information Schools

This section uses empirical data to describe the reality of the library/information schools, how they are institutionally located, and where they exist relative to their parent institution. The analysis is based on the sixty-three schools accredited by COA (ALA's Committee on Accreditation) as identified in the October 1985 listing of graduate library education.[21] Comparative analyses might yield interesting data but they must await another paper and perhaps another author.

This section includes a description of the name variations with which schools identify themselves. The reporting levels and the chief administrative officer's satisfaction with that level comes next. The dispersion of U.S. schools relative to the Carnegie classification of their parent institution and the possible patterns of doctoral-offering schools relative to this classification follows. Data on other dimensions of interest—number of students, number of faculty, size of budget, stability or stagnation of leadership, number of other professional schools on campus, date of founding, etc.—could be examined but are omitted here.

The simple question of who and what we are can be answered in part by how we choose to be called. From the twenty-eight varieties of school, college, division, department, and faculty names for the individual unit and the twelve varieties of degree names bestowed by them, apparently there is significance attached to subtle variations in how library/information schools choose to be known.

Thirty-three schools use the "Science" designator; three see their field pluralistically and use the term "Sciences." Fifteen schools use "Studies"; four say "Service" and "Services"; three are "Management"; two use "Science and Technology"; and two simply invert their titles to obviate the need for a designator and style themselves simply as

"Schools." The decision to include both terms, "Library and Information," in the school's name is the overwhelming favorite chosen by forty-five schools, and one chooses "Informational." Thirteen use only the term "Library"; and two select "Library and Education/Instructional Technology." Only two schools use "Information" alone in their titles. One school has "Archival" in its name and one has "Communication."

The degree names, as might be expected, also show diversity. Although twenty-six schools offer the Master of Library Science, ten provide the Master of Arts, and nine offer the Master of Science in Library Science. Other degree names follow: Master of Library and Information Science—includes a translation of Montreal's degree (4 schools); Master of Science (7); Master of Library Services (3); Master of Librarianship (3); Master of Arts in Library Science (1); Master of Arts in Library and Information Science (1); Master of Library Studies (1); Master of Library and Information Studies (2). Four schools offer two master's degrees, so the total equals sixty-seven rather than sixty-three.

In a recent issue of the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science,* Voos surveyed the number of schools, divisions, departments, and other designations for library information units at five-year intervals from 1960 to 1980 and added 1983 as the most recent year available.[22] His results show a decreasing proportion of department designations and an increase in the number of schools and colleges. Selecting only the 1960, 1970, and 1980 points from Voos's table and updating it with the October 1985 data we observe that the "other" category includes five colleges and two faculties (the Canadian designation roughly equivalent to college). Two of the 1985 group are listed as "admitting no new students"; both are schools (see table 1).

TABLE 1

CHANGES IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE SCHOOL DESIGNATIONS

Year	*No. of Schools*	*Dept., Designation*	*Division, (Percentage)*	*School Designation (Percentage)*		*Other Designation*	*(Percentage)*
1960	32	6	(18.8)	26	(81.3)		
1970	50	10	(20.0)	40	(80.0)		
1980	68	10	(14.6)	52	(76.5)	6	(8.8)
1985	63	6	(9.6)	50	(79.3)	7	(11.1)

From a tally of reporting levels, the overwhelming majority of deans and directors report to a chief academic officer designated as vice-president or vice-chancellor of academic affairs, provost, or executive vice-chancellor. Three deans report directly to the president. Of the remainder, six deans report to the dean of arts and sciences, letters and sciences, humanities, or faculty of arts. Five report to the dean of the graduate school (many others indicated an additional reporting/approval role for the dean of the graduate school for admission, curriculum, and degree matters). Three report to the dean of education and one each reports to the dean of the faculty of management and the dean of professional schools. There is a tendency for deans and directors with relatively more faculty to report to the chief academic officer and for those deans and directors with relatively fewer faculty to report to the dean of another school.

The heads of the schools were surveyed to ascertain if they found their reporting level satisfactory. Forty-four replies were received—thirty from those who report to the chief academic officer or the president and fourteen who report to the dean of the graduate school or another academic unit. In general, everyone expressed satisfaction with the reporting level. Some concerns surfaced relative to size and isolation. One said, "We are equal in name but not in fact." Several noted they were the "smallest independent unit on campus." The disadvantages become apparent when top university officials begin carefully monitoring enrollment figures by school. (It may be helpful to the independent school to normalize the enrollment data dividing each total by the size of faculty after first separating graduate from undergraduate. This creates a fairer comparison figure that can be analyzed further by looking at cost per student across all other graduate schools and colleges.)

Although most found independence a very important benefit, one commented, "Disadvantages arise because of the isolation autonomy can produce." There is a real boundary that surrounds an independent school that is often difficult to penetrate. Typically the large and successful schools—for example, management—often are reluctant to enroll students from another school in their classes. Another department may have such a tightly structured curriculum that a desired course may have more prerequisite hours than a student from a different degree program can afford. Autonomy for the small school at the graduate level often makes it difficult to engage in university dialogue much of which deals with the sheer numbers of undergraduates and with questions about the baccalaureate degree and that are of interest to trustees and state legislators. Collaborative research is also more difficult across school lines. Greater effort is needed to seek out and maintain

communication on common research interests across departments. In addition, it may be more difficult to socialize faculty to norms of research in the more isolated professionally based unit. On the positive side, the small size and autonomy allow the school flexibility in responding to change and speed in initiating new programs. It is also easier to develop a spirit of collegiality among a smaller, more cohesive group.

Nobody commented on what may be one of the most significant factors—that of identity. When the library/information unit is enclosed within a school of education, for example, there is a tendency to view the library/information field as a subset of the discipline of education. There also appeared to be some budgetary disadvantages to the departmental level as compared to the school, although the evidence for this is less clear when size of faculty is taken into account.

The major factor in assessing status for any one school is, of course, a comparison with the way other professional schools are structured on the particular campus. There is more variety in the place and number of professional schools on university campuses than there is for academic disciplines. A typical pattern treats the larger professional schools as independent units—e.g., engineering, law, and the business school. Medical schools have assumed almost a separate existence within health science clusters. The smaller schools—e.g., journalism, social work, architecture, urban studies, and library/information—are often treated as structural parallels.

The importance of the classification of the parent institution cannot be ignored. To compare library/information schools according to their parent institutions' rank, the Carnegie classification of colleges and universities was used.[23]

The Carnegie classification is divided into six primary classes as follows:

I. *Doctoral Granting Institutions*—those characterized by a significant level and breadth of activity in the commitment to a doctoral-level education.
II. *Comprehensive Universities and Colleges*—those characterized by diverse post-baccalaureate programs (including first professional), but that do not engage in significant doctoral-level education.
III. *Liberal Arts Colleges*—may have modest occupational programs but a strong liberal arts tradition.
IV. *Two Year Colleges and Institutions*—self-explanatory.
V. *Professional Schools and other Specialized Institutions*—includes theological seminaries, separate medical, management, engineer-

ing or law schools, teachers' colleges, military institutes, and the like.

VI. *Institutions for Nontraditional Study*—do not have a campus in the conventional sense.

Each main class is further subdivided into separate subclasses relative to complexity. The latest published edition of the classification is 1976 so that designations may not be completely accurate for those institutions which have changed significantly in the past nine years—e.g., Drexel University.

Accredited library/information schools are found in only four of these categories. Of these, only one school (Rosary) lies within the liberal arts college group and only one in category six (Atlanta) for other specialized institutions.

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of accredited schools within the first two categories. The Canadian schools are excluded, although the pattern exhibited by those seven schools would perhaps be quite similar. The October 1985 list of accredited schools includes sixty-three schools with two noted as "admitting no new students." Table 2 excludes those two plus the seven Canadian schools and the two schools that do not fall into Carnegie classifications I and II.

Library/information schools tend to be represented in the more prestigious institutions. The ratio of institutions in Carnegie class I to class II is 24:76, while the ratio of library/information schools in those same two classes is reversed—82:18. The ratio of public to private universities in the combined Carnegie classes I and II is 61:39. The ratio of library/information schools in public institutions and those in private is one even more strongly biased toward the public—79:21.

Of twenty-one U.S. library/information schools that currently offer the doctorate, nineteen are in Carnegie class I institutions and only two in class II. As table 3 demonstrates, the doctoral programs are also unevenly distributed among the total library/information school population and are biased to those within larger, more prestigious parent institutions.

The larger institutions are more apt to have many different professional programs including library/information studies. Second, it is no doubt easier for the school located in a class A-1 institution to develop a doctoral program. Third, the atmosphere of the research university will incline toward research activities. The extent to which the library/information school can demonstrate productivity in this regard may affect its status on the campus.

TABLE 2

ACCREDITED U.S. LIBRARY/INFORMATION SCHOOLS AND CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION OF PARENT INSTITUTION

	PU•	*(Percentage)*		*SCDI†*	*(Percentage)*	*PR§*	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI†*	*(Percentage)*	*Total*	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI†*	*Total (Percentage)*
	A1	29	(3.7)	14	(26.9)	22	(2.8)	2	(3.85)	51	(6.6)	16	(30.75)
	A2	33	(4.2)	9	(17.3)	14	(1.8)	3	(5.8)	47	(6.0)	12	(23.1)
	A3	38	(4.9)	9	(17.3)	18	(2.3)	2	(3.85)	56	(7.2)	11	(21.15)
	A4	19	(2.4)	3	(5.8)	11	(1.4)	0	-	30	(3.9)	3	(5.8)
Total I		119	(15.2)	35	(67.3)	65	(8.3)	7	(13.5)	184	(23.6)	42	(80.8)
	B1	250	(32.2)	6	(11.5)	131	(16.8)	4	(7.7)	381	(49.0)	10	(19.2)
	B2	104	(13.4)	0		109	(14.0)	0	-	213	(27.4)	0	
Total II		354	(45.5)	6	(11.5)	240	(30.8)	4	(7.7)	594	(76.4)	10	(19.2)
Total I & II		473	(60.8)	41	(78.8)	305	(39.2)	11	(21.2)	778	(100.0)	52	(100.0)

• Public Institutions
† Schools, Colleges, Departments of Information
§ Private Schools

TABLE 3

Distribution of Library/Information Schools Offering Doctoral Programs

	PU•		*Ph.D.*		*PR*§		*Ph.D.*		*Total*		*Ph.D.*	
	SCDI†	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI*†	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI*†	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI*†	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI*†	*(Percentage)*	*SCDI*†	*(Percentage)*
A1	14	(26.9)	9	(42.9)	2	(3.85)	2	(9.5)	16	(30.75)	11	(52.4)
A2	9	(17.3)	4	(19.0)	3	(5.8)	2	(9.5)	12	(23.1)	6	(28.5)
A3	9	(17.3)	1	(4.85)	2	(3.85)	0	-	11	(21.15)	1	(4.85)
A4	3	(5.8)	1	(4.85)	0	-	0	-	3	(5.8)	1	(4.85)
Total I	35	(67.3)	15	(71.5)	7	(13.5)	4	(19.5)	42	(80.8)	19	(90.5)
B1	6	(11.5)		0	4	(7.7)	2	(9.5)	10	19.2	2	9.5
Totals[1]	41	78.8	15	71.5	11	21.2	6	28.5	52	100.0	21	100.0

[1] Row B2 omitted from analysis as there were no SCDI in this category
• Public Institutions
† Schools, Colleges, Departments of Information
§ Private Schools

It is tempting to argue that schools within the more prestigious institutions—especially if they are public—are more protected from threats of closing than are those of second level institutions or even lower subclasses of class I. The two schools in the October 1985 list identified as "accepting no new students" plus the five schools that closed earlier show no discernible pattern. Half are public schools (3), half are private; half are high-status (A-1) universities and half are lower status.

When enrollments and employment opportunities shrunk in the mid-1970s, library/information science schools suffered a drop in status within their parent institutions. Although little change occurred in the organizational position of most schools, the drop in enrollment, following a realization that the so-called shortage of librarians was a paper shortage, combined with other factors to cause problems. This was a less favorable period for higher education generally. Research efforts and grant support tilted toward the hard sciences. The growing importance of the computer vied with the academic library for a central position on campus. All of these factors have contributed to diminishing the status of the library/information schools. Several schools closed. The remaining ones have begun to explore newer and more glamorous markets for graduates, particularly in computer-related fields. The impact of these shifts in orientation has yet to be fully realized.

Changes in the importance of one professional school or department on the university campus can usually be associated with the importance ascribed to the profession or discipline in the larger arena. Astute administrative officers of library/information schools are employing a number of strategies to improve the organizational position of their unit on their home campuses by examining the school's standing within the institution.

Measures of Standing Within Institutions

It is probably true that one cannot—or at least should not—divorce the management of any human enterprise from the reality of politics. Resources are always scarce and, to greater or lesser degree, distributed according to the politics of the situation. Those of higher status gain more resources relative to their needs and desires than do those of lower status. One barometer of status is the amount of personnel, financial and space resources the unit receives relative to others on the campus. Even though it is not always easy to determine relative success in resource allocations on many campuses, they are a measure of status and should be monitored. Monitoring the organization's status within its

environment will bring other important insights about how the particular institution works.

Four places where the comparative standing of the unit should be assessed are (1) the autonomy of the school's chief administrator, (2) the level of financial support, (3) the condition of the school's equipment and physical facilities, and (4) its relationships with other schools and departments. Each of these is discussed briefly with suggestions for data elements to collect and examine on a cyclic basis.

The autonomy of the school's chief administrator is a different measure than the school's success in garnering resources described earlier. This measure is chiefly concerned with the process by which decisions get made. In personnel decisions, for example, where is the real decision made? If the decision effectively rests within the school despite pro forma approvals at higher levels, it scores high on the autonomy issue. In these parlous times, however, what were once pro forma approvals have a way of becoming more substantive. The autonomy given a school in personnel decisions derives from the expectation that the school will be alert to changing philosophy and changing needs in the larger institution in the way it carries out this primary responsibility.

Reallocations of budgeted money to unanticipated opportunities or problem areas must occur frequently in a dynamic environment. The degree to which the dean or director has the power to effect such changes and the extent to which changes are possible is another important indicator of autonomy. Reallocation of space is a comparable decision but significantly less important and generally much more easily accomplished internally without prior approvals. Changes in curriculum and degree programs are another place where the university often grants pro forma approval up to the initiation of a new degree program where the board of trustees and the state legislators usually wish to exercise reviewing and veto rights. A small study of the variations in process by which schools have changed their names would be interesting when relating it to power and autonomy issues.

Financial support is the second area where objective measures of standing can be gathered. The unit's proportion of the overall institutional budget and of the budget for instructional programs is a data point to be examined for changes from year to year. Another is the change in the number of faculty and staff lines and in the rank at which rehiring is permitted. As external funding support for research and for scholarship aid continues to rise in importance within the institution, the proportions of external funding must be analyzed. Examining the annual budget of dollars per full-time equivalent (FTE) student and the

scholarship aid per FTE student provides information for assessing how strong a case can be made to justify additional support for the school. Scholarship aid as a percent of the total tuition and standardized living costs for all students per year is another useful measure. Sponsored research dollars per FTE faculty member is another powerful figure—especially when viewed comparatively with other schools and departments.

Similar measures for looking at changes in equipment and physical facilities can be developed. Change in the number of assignable square feet, in the total square feet per FTE faculty member, in the acquisition of additional space for research projects, and special development activities are ways of monitoring this aspect. As the library/information schools seek additional outside resources to support their increasingly technology-based programs, it will be important to collect data on the market value of all instructional equipment, especially microcomputers, terminals, peripherals, and possibly software. Realistic depreciation schedules by age and condition (with maintenance costs factored in) also need to be tracked to ascertain if the school is advancing in developing its capitalized base. The number of telephone lines per faculty member is another quick and useful data element.

The fourth area to measure to determine relative standing within the university is the level and kinds of relationships the unit has with other units. How many joint programs are on the books and how many students enroll in them each year as a percent of the total number of students in the school? Are there joint faculty appointments and, if so, what percentage of the total? Is the school a net importer or exporter of students? That is, how many library/information students take courses in other schools and departments compared to the number of students from other areas who take courses in the library/information school? Are there any special collaborative projects ongoing involving at least one other school? If so, at what level is the project being carried out and how visible is the project to the rest of the campus? What kind of representation does the faculty have on university-wide committees of importance? Is the dean/director regularly named to important policy-making groups?

The days of happy isolation are behind us. In a recent interview, Kathleen Heim, dean of the School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State, spoke candidly of her fear of leaving the campus while across-the-board cuts were taking place, "knowing that other directors had found out [while away that] their schools were being taken away from them."[24] Heim goes on to point out that her school survived relatively intact, a result she attributes to the increased visibility of the

school on campus. Heim also mentions Louisiana's joint master's degree program with computer science as an example of the responsiveness needed by a school in reaching out for relationships with other important and powerful units on campus.

Before leaving the measurement aspect, it would be well to focus briefly on the relationship of the dean or director to the chief academic officer of the institution. The individual who holds this office wields an enormous amount of power. His or her philosophy and style can affect deeply the individual standing of any unit within the university. It is important to study the academic background of this officer, his/her length of tenure, and the activism with which he/she pursues particular goals. The frequency with which the library/information school's chief administrative officer (CAO) meets with the chief academic officer of the university relative to the frequency of such meetings with other academic administrators is an indicator that bears watching. What is the CAO's intuitive ranking of schools within the institution and, more importantly, what criteria are used to develop that ranking? How open is the individual to changing his/her perceptions of the school? What are the levers of importance?

Within this section of the article, the primary focus has been on understanding the school's position as a dynamic phenomenon. Status is not static. A second underlying theme is the importance of developing a long-range strategy to arrive at a place in the sun. The collection and analysis of clues within the environment that imply how well the school is succeeding in its goal is an important corollary.

The Future Outlook

What will the future bring for library/information schools? Will they continue to exist as autonomous units? Will their standing within the universities rise or fall in the coming decades? These questions are virtually impossible to answer. The information arena is exploding. For a time it seemed as though libraries and library schools would be sidelined and that new more aggressive units would emerge from outside the field to meet the voracious demands of the information society. However, change is taking place within the field. Witness the most visible change in the names of the schools. Curriculum changes sometimes precede name changes but more often follow it. The library/information graduates, often chided by educators and practitioners alike for their lack of assertiveness, seem to be, despite all, moving confidently into new positions in the larger information arena. Libraries are quietly transforming themselves. There is an overall acceptance (certainly not

universal, however) of the need for change in order for this profession to continue to serve well the changing information needs of society.

One might become almost optimistic about the possibilities were it not for several other factors. The realization of the need to reposition our schools and library/information centers comes rather late. The bandwagon is already gathering speed. Other professional fields have discovered the opportunities emanating from the management of information. As the library/information schools struggle to defend and expand their domain through logical extension of their curricula into the areas of database management, economics of information, telecommunications policy, and the like, there are questions of territory to be resolved. We face competing institutional claims to ownership within the information disciplines. Cognate fields like archives, records management, indexing, and documentation have found independent life and are reluctant to be taken into the bosom of library/information schools. Even within our field, there are many questions about our boundaries and whether the pursuit of certain elements of the game are worth the risk.

Organizations, like human beings, seek homeostasis. That is, they seek to achieve a dynamic equilibrium. The growth of any one subsystem within the organization disturbs that equilibrium so that forces arise to contain the disturbance and to return the institution to its former equilibrium point. It takes enormous energy and will to move the organization beyond to a new equilibrium point. Can this be accomplished by the library/information field?

My own perception is that if we do not grow, we will probably die although it may be a slow and lingering death. There is a spirit of change in our field. Is it strong enough to carry us through all the disruptions and turmoil that change brings? To survive and to increase our standing we must accept growth of an order of magnitude that we have never faced before. Can we find tolerance for the growth and change that confront us? It is these questions that make the issue of standing within the institution crucially important.

References

1. Perkins, James A., ed. *The University as as Organization* (a report for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education). New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973.

2. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language,* 1971 ed., s.v. "Environment."

3. Pheiffer, Jeffrey. *Organizations and Organization Theory* (Pitman Series in Business Management and Organizational Behavior). Marshfield, Mass.: Pitman, 1982.

4. Thompson, James D. *Organizations in Action.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 70.

5. Weick, Karl E. "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21(March 1976):1. (This phrase refers to systems in which the actions of one part need not be tightly integrated with the others.)

6. Cohen, Michael, et al. "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17(March 1972):1-19.

7. Mintzberg, Henry. *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979.

8. Ibid., p. 349.

9. Simon, Herbert A. *The New Science of Management Decision,* rev. ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977, p. 98.

10. Aldrich, Howard. *Organizations and Environments.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979.

11. Kimberly, John R., et al. *The Organizational Life Cycle: Issues in Creation, Transformation, and Decline of Organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980.

12. Mintzberg, *The Structuring of Organizations,* p. 241.

13. Alpert, Daniel. "Performance and Paralysis: The Organizational Context of the American Research University." *Journal of Higher Education* 56(May/June 1985):245.

14. Ibid., p. 252.

15. Bass, James L. *University Organization: A Matrix Analysis of Academic Professions.* New York: Human Sciences Press, 1982, p. 209.

16. Weick, Karl E. "Contradiction in a Community of Scholars: The Cohesion-Accuracy Tradeoff." In *College and University Organization: Insights from the Behavioral Sciences,* edited by James L. Bass, p. 25. New York: New York University Press, 1984.

17. Alpert, "Performance and Paralysis," p. 25.

18. Bass, *University Organization,* p. 67.

19. Boyer, Ernest L., and Hechinger, Fred M. *Higher Learning in the Nation's Service.* Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1981.

20. Cleveland, Harlan. "Educating for the Information Society." *Change* 17(July/Aug. 1985):13-21.

21. American Library Association. Committee on Accreditation. "Standards for Accreditation, 1972." Chicago: ALA/COA, 1972, 1985.

22. Voos, Henry. "Brief Communications: The Name's the Thing." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 25(Winter 1985):232-34.

23. Carnegie Foundation on Higher Education. *A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education,* rev. ed. Berkeley, Calif.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1976.

24. Cargill, Jennifer. "A Conversation with Kathleen Heim." *Technicalities* 5(Nov. 1985):4.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank